

Present: Andy Bennett; Hans Brandal; John Coney; Dick Burkhardt, Chair; Ray Day, Jr.; Dave Elliott, Vice-Chair; John Jensen; Sandy Paul-Lyle; Holly Plackett; Anirudh Sahni

Excused: Dwight Baker; Joan Sells; Mike Taylor

Staff: Barbara de Michele, Community Relations Planner; Arthur Thornbury, Council Staff

Guests: Rachel Smith, Field Director, Transportation Choices Coalition

Dick Burkhardt called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. He introduced Smith.

Transportation Choices Legislative Priorities

Smith reviewed legislative priorities for Transportation Choices Coalition (TCC), saying that this session could produce a vastly different transportation system for King County. Among the group's priorities:

- The Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Task Force recommended that money allocated for CTR funding be spent more efficiently on high priority corridors. The Growth Transportation Effectiveness Center would work to fulfill this mandate. CTR funding would be restricted to high-growth counties, although low-growth counties could opt into the funding if they wish. In the same way, money would be funneled to high growth areas within high-growth counties, thus freeing some companies from CTR requirements. TCC is hoping for \$5 million in additional funding for the biennium.
- HOT Lane implementation – TCC will monitor this funding to ensure that it is not diverted from the designated project.
- Renewable fuels legislation – Governor Gregoire is proposing that all fuel contain at least 2% biodiesel or 2.5% ethanol. Smith called this “a bill for Eastern Washington” since it would require that all bio-diesel and ethanol be provided by in-state farmers. Members raised several concerns: Would Metro’s fleet have to be retrofitted to accommodate this requirement? Would bus manufacturers honor their warranties? De Michele said she would contact Jim Boon, Operations Supervisor, for answers.
- Safe Routes to School/Transit – this will be TCC’s response to Tim Eyeman’s latest endeavor (Initiative 915) to roll back motor vehicle excise taxes (MVET).
- Re-writing the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) legislation to include transit funding is TCC’s highest priority, according to Smith. Because the original RTID legislation restricts transit funding to capital projects, an RTID ballot measure would not pass in the Seattle area. (Please note: “RTID” could be changed to a different designation). Four separate bills will be introduced, written by representatives Jarrett, Murray and Upthegrove, and by Senator Haugen. TCC will decide which legislation to support after reviewing all the bills. “We don’t want voters to have to decide between Sound Transit II and the RTID,” said Smith.



Smith also invited TAC members to join TCC's Lobby Day on Thursday, February 16th.

Waterborne Transit Letter

Members reviewed the revised letter and made several minor changes. John Coney moved, Ray Day seconded, passed unanimously to adopt the letter as amended. (See attached below). De Michele will transmit the letter to the Regional Transit Committee chair when he/she is selected by the Council.

Committee Business

- Sandy Paul-Lyle and Holly Plackett reported on the Auburn-Kent Transit Sounding Board and the Central-Eastside Transit Sounding Board, respectively. The Auburn-Kent proposals are being taken to the public this month. If adopted, the proposals would increase service in the south by 17,000 hours, with some much-needed improvements to Route 150 (dividing it into three routes) and Route 169 (extending it to Four Corners in Maple Valley). The Eastside process has been extended several months past its original time-line, so the group can look at a fairly complex set of proposals that could be implemented over a two- to three-year period.
- In reviewing the Legislative Forum, members expressed the view that TAC should sponsor such a forum next year, that it might be better timed after the elections and after Thanksgiving, and that we should try to get a Republican and a Democrat, or a House member and a Senator, for different perspectives. It was also suggested that we publicize this event through Transportation Choices.
- Members said they would like to tackle the Vision Statement during their work on the Six-Year Plan, not at the retreat.
- Holly moved, Hans seconded, passed unanimously that the February meeting be moved from the 14th (Valentines' Day) to the 21st.
- John Coney announced the formation of the Streetcar Alliance, a group disappointed about the collapse of the monorail and seeking to increase the mode split between cars and transit in Seattle. He invited anyone interested to join this group.
- The group listed several topics for Kevin Desmond's visit during the retreat, including: leaving 3rd Avenue as a busway, a report on the passenger-only ferry task force, funding issues, disaster preparedness, increasing the number of bus shelters, marketing and mapping, fare increase, the impact of the reduction of Council members on this Committee, siting park and rides within the City of Seattle, increasing the funding for marketing.

Adjournment

Burkhart adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:40 p.m.

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The Honorable Reagan Dunn, Chair,
King County Council Regional Transit Committee
King County Courthouse
KCC-CC-1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember Dunn,

King County Metro Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) members would like to share our preliminary perspectives with regard to King County's role in waterborne transit (WBT) in the greater Puget Sound area.

Our members worked with staff throughout 2005 to review and provide feedback on the King County Waterborne Transit Service Study. We agreed unanimously that the Summary Report for the Waterborne Transit Policy Study is very high quality work. We felt that presentations at our meetings reflected thorough planning and strong attention to detail. We appreciated staff patience and attention to our many questions. We feel that the level of detail in the completed Policy Study was important in that it was easily understood and educational, even to those unfamiliar with the topic of waterborne transit.

With that said, TAC members reached consensus on these points:

King County should not be involved in waterborne transit policy/implementation.

Waterborne transit should have the lowest priority as a policy decision at the county level. Lack of available funding and a long list of public transportation and transit needs are the main reasons that waterborne transit should have the lowest priority on the King County Council and Regional Transit Committee's agendas.

We acknowledge two exceptions:

- **Vashon Island waterborne transit policy and implementation should be considered should the State of Washington decide to discontinue passenger only service from Vashon to downtown Seattle.** Should that happen, King County should immediately consider providing replacement service with new funding sources. This is an important route and service of transportation which, if discontinued, will adversely impact other means of transportation, namely Metro buses and the roads between West Seattle and downtown. If passenger only boats are eliminated, those who normally ride the passenger only boats will require additional bus service or will choose to drive from Fauntleroy.
- Waterborne transit **should be considered among the mix of services used to mitigate for long construction projects on the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the SR520 Bridge**, and for **emergency services** should either of these facilities be incapacitated by a natural or man-made disaster.

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Even though “choices” are a very important element in Metro’s transit policies, we believe residents are more interested in congestion relief when it comes to the application of resources and expansion of our existing transportation system in the greater Puget Sound area. This study does an excellent job discussing how applicable waterborne transit is to our specific area; however, waterborne transit does not measure up as a component to congestion relief when looked at from a taxpayer’s point of view.

Again, our group very much appreciated being active participants in the development of this study. We commend David Hull, Metro transit planner and Paul Lavallee, consultant, for their outstanding work. Again, King County should focus completely on the issues of fundability and mobility as we select, fund and build our major transportation and transit systems in the Puget Sound area.

Sincerely,

Dick Burkhardt, Chair
King County Transit Advisory Committee

Cc Ron Sims, King County Executive
 King County Councilmembers
 Harold Taniguchi, Director, King County Department of Transportation
 Laurie Brown, Deputy Director, KCDOT
 Kevin Desmond, General Manager, King County Metro Transit
 Victor Obeso, Manager, Metro Transit Service Development
 David Hull, Supervisor, Metro Transit Service Planning
 Paul Lavallee, consultant, IBI